United Nations A/C.5/53/SR.64

General Assembly
Fifty-third session

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 64th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 25 June 1999, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Abelian ..... (Armenia)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Agenda item 113: Programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999 (*continued*)

Question of East Timor (*continued*)

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99-80888 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 113: Programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999 (*continued*)

Question of East Timor (*continued*)
(A/53/7/Add.14; A/C.5/53/63; A/C.5/53/L.76)

1. **The Chairman** recalled that the General Assembly, by its decision 53/472 had authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitment up to $35 million, from all sources of funds, for the initial requirements of the United Nations activities related to East Timor, pending further action by the Security Council and the submission of a revised budget by the Secretary-General. The Committee now had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the question of East Timor A/C.5/53/63 containing the revised proposed budget for the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) for the period from 5 May to 31 August 1999, which amounted to $52,531,100 gross, and the related report of ACABQ (A/53/7/Add.14).

2. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of ACABQ (A/53/7/Add.14), said that the Advisory Committee had concluded that the budget estimates had been prepared under conditions of uncertainty, which had made it difficult to provide accurate estimates. There were a number of instances where the costs estimated might prove to be higher than required. Conversely, costs in other areas might have been underestimated. The Advisory Committee had therefore not recommended any adjustment of the estimates. It expected, however, that in the implementation of the budget the Secretariat would take its views fully into account.

3. Voluntary contributions to the trust fund for UNAMET were currently estimated at $46.7 million. The nature and status of the contributions were set out in a table in the annex to the report. It was the view of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General would require maximum flexibility in the use of those funds and that he should continue to seek untied contributions. The question of the mode of financing and related appropriation and assessment was dealt with in paragraphs 15 to 18 of the report.

4. **Mr. Herawan** (Indonesia) said that his delegation attached the utmost importance to the prompt implementation of the agreements of 5 May 1999 with a view to enabling the East Timorese to determine freely the future of East Timor through the popular consultation scheduled for 8 August 1999. Regrettably, that process was already behind schedule, especially with regard to the dissemination of information on the concept of special autonomy and the registration of voters.

5. While UNAMET could not in any way be considered a peacekeeping mission, his delegation was willing to be flexible regarding the mode of financing, provided that the Mission was conducted in conformity with the mandate set forth in the agreements and in Security Council resolution 1246 (1999).

6. **Ms. Aragon** (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), said it was vital that sufficient funds should be made available to the Secretary-General to enable him to discharge the responsibilities assigned to him in the agreements of 5 May 1999 and by the Security Council in its resolution 1246 (1999). Her delegation therefore supported the appropriation of the $52.5 million required for the implementation of the mandate of UNAMET for the period 5 May–31 August 1999, and urged the Committee to take action on the matter without further delay.

7. **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico) said that the activities of the United Nations in East Timor should be financed through a special account with a special scale of assessments.

8. **The Chairman** said that the Committee would suspend its formal meeting with a view to reaching agreement on a draft resolution.

The meeting was suspended at 10.15 a.m. and resumed at 1 p.m.

Draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.76

9. **The Chairman**, introducing draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.76, said that in the last line of paragraph 3, the words "financial rules, regulations," should be inserted after "in accordance with the", and the words "for such contributions" should be added after "General Assembly". It had also been proposed that the draft resolution should contain the following additional operative paragraph:

> "*Reiterates* that the expenses of the Organization shall be borne by the Members as apportioned by the General Assembly;".

10. *Draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.76, as orally revised, was adopted.*

11. **Mr. Künztle** (Germany), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and, in addition, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, said that the Union wished to

reiterate its support for the efforts to bring peace to East Timor. It had warmly welcomed the signing of the agreements of 5 May 1999, which had represented a major step towards a settlement, and it had supported the adoption by the General Assembly of decision 53/472. The draft resolution just adopted by the Committee would further secure the functioning of the United Nations presence in East Timor by placing UNAMET on a sound financial footing, which was a prerequisite for the effective implementation of its mandate.

12. The European Union agreed with ACABQ, however, that the Secretariat should have specified in the revised proposed budget the mode of financing for the Mission, so that the requisite amount could have been appropriated and assessed. It was to be hoped that its failure to do so would not create a precedent. The Union also concurred with ACABQ that, in accordance with Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations, the expenses of UNAMET were expenses of the Organization, which should be borne by the Member States as apportioned by the General Assembly.

13. **Ms. Goicochea Estenoz** (Cuba) expressed regret that the draft resolution did not deal with the issue of tied contributions.

14. **Ms. Duschner** (Canada) expressed satisfaction at the draft resolution's adoption by consensus and at the flexibility shown by delegations in the informal consultations.

15. **Mr. Moktefi** (Algeria) said that his delegation wished to stress that voluntary contributions made in support of mandated activities of the United Nations should not be subject to conditions. It concurred with the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General should continue to seek untied contributions.

16. **Mr. Park Hae-yun** (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation strongly supported the efforts to bring peace to East Timor and welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution.

17. **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico), reiterated that activities approved by the Security Council should be financed through a special account with a special scale of assessments.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

United Nations A/C.5/53/SR.65

General Assembly
Fifty-third session

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 65th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 13 July 1999, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Abelian ..... (Armenia)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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99-81172 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 113: Programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999 (*continued*)

International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (A/54/127 and A/53/7/Add.15)

1. **The Chairman** drew the Committee's attention to the report of the Secretary-General on the outline of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 for the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (A/54/127) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/53/7/Add.15).

2. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, after reviewing the report of the Secretary-General in document A/54/127, the Advisory Committee recommended General Assembly approval of the amount of SwF 59,204,600 for the outline for the biennium 2000–2001 for the International Trade Centre (ITC). However, the Advisory Committee expected that the submission of the next outline for ITC would be in full conformity with the procedure set out in paragraph 11 of its report A/53/7/Add.3, as endorsed by the General Assembly.

3. **Mr. Sarevo** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, expressed support for the Secretary-General's proposal to establish an ITC budget outline estimate of SwF 59,204,600 for the biennium 2000–2001, as also recommended by ACABQ. The late issuance of the outline, however, was a deviation from the procedure agreed upon, and he trusted that, in future, that procedure would be properly followed.

4. **Mr. Garfield** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that he strongly supported the work of ITC and stressed that all necessary resources should be provided in order to enable the Centre to implement its mandate fully. He noted with concern the delay in issuing the outline and the fact that the fascicle for section 11 B of the proposed programme budget for 2000–2001 was not based on the outline. The budget fascicle should be prepared and submitted in accordance with established rules and procedures since ITC was part of the regular budget. Lastly, he requested a clarification of the third sentence in paragraph 4 of the report of ACABQ (A/53/7/Add.15).

5. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) expressed his delegation's support for the work of ITC. The report of the Secretary-General on the outline of the proposed programme budget for the Centre, however, lacked transparency and failed to justify the increase of 1.4 per cent, in real terms, referred to in paragraph 5. In addition, the reference to the average rate of growth for part IV was unacceptable because it indicated a formulistic approach to budgeting that had no basis concerning the actual needs of ITC for the next biennium.

6. He agreed with the view of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the need for a statement of objectives of the individual organizational units, as well as a citation of their outputs to be achieved by the end of the year. His delegation also shared the concern of ACABQ with regard to the late submission of the budget outline and the confusion that that had created with respect to established procedures. Accordingly, while his delegation was not in a position to support the budget outline for ITC or the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, it could, however, support a formulation taking note of the two reports under consideration.

7. **The Chairman** proposed that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the outline of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 for the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (A/54/127) and of the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon contained in document A/53/7/Add.15.

8. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 118: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (*continued*)

Letters from the President and the Acting President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/53/64 and A/C.5/53/65)

9. **The Chairman** recalled that the General Assembly, in resolution 53/36 C, had, *inter alia*, requested the Committee on Contributions to review the procedural aspects of the consideration of requests for exemption under Article 19, in particular, modalities for dealing with such requests received when the Committee was not in session and to make recommendations to the General Assembly in that respect before the end of the fifty-third session. Accordingly, he drew the Committee's attention to a letter dated 1 July 1999

from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/53/64), transmitting a letter dated 28 June 1999 from the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions to the President of the General Assembly containing in an appendix extracts from the report of the Committee on Contributions on its fifty-ninth session concerning requests for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter received from Member States. He also drew attention to a letter dated 12 July 1999 from the Acting President of the General Assembly addressed to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/53/65), transmitting a letter dated 8 July 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia containing a request, under Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations, concerning his country's arrears.

10. **Mr. Sareva** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, said that the Union had consistently advocated a most stringent application of Article 19 of the Charter, which provided the sole effective incentive prompting Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions. The Union, therefore, placed great importance on the various provisions of General Assembly resolution 53/36 C for tightening its application.

11. He commended the efforts by several countries concerned to make payments to reduce their arrears, with a view to eventually bringing them to a point below the minimum necessary to avoid the application of Article 19, and the measures by other Member States that had been able to reduce their arrears below the said minimum during the first half of 1999, many of which faced severe economic and fiscal hardships. The European Union supported the recommendations by the Committee on Contributions with regard to granting exemptions under Article 19 to four Member States and agreed with the Committee that exemptions must be regarded as a strictly exceptional measure for circumstances where the failure to pay was due to conditions beyond the control of the Member State concerned. Lastly, the Union remained strongly committed to its position that the General Assembly must adhere to the procedure laid down in rule 160 of the rules of procedure.

12. **Mr. Volski** (Georgia) said that, during its first years of independence, Georgia had been able to fulfil its financial obligations to the United Nations. The conflict in Abkhazia, however, had forced approximately 300,000 residents to leave their homes and had created severe budget problems. The refugee situation had been further aggravated by the events taking place in May 1998, which had forced 50,000 more people to flee their homes. In addition, a severe drought had seriously reduced agricultural production, and the overall financial crisis affecting the countries of the former Soviet Union had given rise to further hardship.

13. Nevertheless, the Government of Georgia attached great importance to fulfilling its obligations to international organizations. It had already taken measures pay its assessed contributions for the current year and would submit a schedule for paying off its arrears and take all the necessary steps to achieve that goal. As indicated in paragraph 100 of document A/C.5/53/64, some members of the Committee on Contributions had expressed the view that the Committee had had enough time to consider the request of Georgia. His Government was endeavouring to pay its arrears and would like its request to be considered by the Committee and dealt with in a positive manner.

14. **Mr. Pashayev** (Azerbaijan), **Mr. Saha** (India), **Mr. Jara** (Chile), **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico), **Mr. d'Escragnolle-Taunay** (Brazil), **Mr. Holubov** (Ukraine) and **Mr. Sial** (Pakistan) expressed support for the request made by the representative of Georgia, in view of the conditions beyond that country's control.

15. **Mr. Armitage** (Australia) said that his delegation supported the recommendations by the Committee on Contributions concerning the requests for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter. Australia believed that such requests should first be considered by the Committee on Contributions, which was the body established for that purpose. In the recent past, there had been a number of deviations from that procedure. Nevertheless, the discussions held in the Fifth Committee in late 1998 and subsequent General Assembly resolutions had made it clear that the General Assembly was keen to reassert that procedure.

16. While the General Assembly had the authority under the Charter to grant exemptions, a decision had been taken under the rules of procedure to impose a certain discipline in that regard. If Article 19 was to have any meaning as the sole instrument to encourage the timely payment of assessed contributions, it needed to be implemented in a consistent manner. The Committee on Contributions should consider requests for exemptions from the provisions of Article 19, before the Fifth Committee took any decisions in that regard. The efforts of particular countries to meet their financial obligations should be kept separate from the issue as to how the Member States ensured the implementation of Article 19. On that basis, Australia was prepared to approve the recommendations by the Committee on Contributions concerning the four requests for exemptions.

17. **Mr. Sareva** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, said that they held rule 160 of the rules of procedure in very high esteem. That had nothing to do with making a judgement on the ability of Georgia to pay its assessed contributions. The consensus reached in the Fifth Committee in late 1998 had been achieved after long and arduous negotiations and reflected the very delicate balance of opinions. Through the adoption of resolution 53/36 C, the General Assembly had adhered to the principle laid down in rule 160. Accordingly, the Fifth Committee should abide by the consensus reached in that regard.

18. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that his delegation supported the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Contributions contained in document A/C.5/53/64. In 1998, the General Assembly had reaffirmed the importance of the advisory role of that Committee regarding the application of Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Committee on Contributions had declined to act on the request of Georgia in June 1999 because the established deadline for such requests had not been met. He noted that the deadline had been well publicized throughout May of that year, and that the other Member States requesting exemption under Article 19 had had no difficulty in meeting the deadline. His delegation believed that the General Assembly should consider no requests for exemption under Article 19 without the expert advice of the Committee on Contributions, but was prepared to go along with any consensus arrived at at the current meeting of the Fifth Committee.

19. **The Chairman** noted that the letter dated 8 July 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia had been delayed in the office of the President of the General Assembly, and that the Chairman's personal intervention had been necessary in order for the letter to be transmitted to the Fifth Committee secretariat in time for the issuance of the relevant documents.

20. **Ms. Buergo-Rodriguez** (Cuba) said that some other delegations appeared to be somewhat selective in their interpretation of General Assembly resolution 53/36. That resolution had struck a delicate but clear balance in delineating the roles to be played by the General Assembly and by the Committee on Contributions with regard to requests for exemptions under Article 19. While it was desirable and proper to transmit all such requests to the General Assembly through the Committee on Contributions, and to do so on a timely basis, that procedure should not be allowed to interfere with the ability of the General Assembly to take decisions on such requests. With that in mind, however, her delegation supported the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions with regard to the requests from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Comoros, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan.

The meeting was suspended at 10.55 a.m. and resumed at 1.20 p.m.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

United Nations A/C.5/53/SR.66

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Summary record of the 66th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 13 July 1999, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Abelian ..... (Armenia)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mseile

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99-81190 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

Agenda item 118: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (*continued*)

Letters from the President and the Acting President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee (continued) (A/C.5/53/64 and A/C.5/53/65)

1. **Mr. Ahounou** (Côte d'Ivoire) expressed his delegation's strong dissatisfaction with the Chairman's approach to solving the problem presented by the request of the Permanent Representative of Georgia for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations, contained in document A/C.5/53/65. In his delegation's view, the Chairman had failed to provide delegations with clear instructions with regard to the procedures to be followed, in the informal informal discussions following his suspension of the previous meeting. A consensus appeared to have emerged in favour of accepting the request of Georgia, yet not all delegations had been allowed to participate in the informal informal discussion of it.

2. **The Chairman** stressed that he had not prevented any Member States from participating in the informal informal discussion, and that since no consensus had actually been reached on the request, he had had no choice but to consult with the Member States concerned.

3. **Mr. Yussuf** (United Republic of Tanzania) expressed his delegation's support for the views expressed by the representative of Côte d'Ivoire. The Committee should follow the procedures that it had itself set out. If a consensus could not be arrived at in a formal meeting, the Committee could hold informal consultations, reserving informal informal discussion as a last resort.

The meeting was suspended at 3.45 p.m. and resumed at 5.45 p.m.

Draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.77

4. **The Chairman**, introducing draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.77, said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution.

5. *Draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.77 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78 on the request by Georgia

6. **The Chairman**, introducing draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78, said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution.

7. *Draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78 was adopted.*

8. **Mr. Sareva** (Finland), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union's views on draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78 would be expressed in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

9. **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico) said that all applications for exemptions under Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations should be considered on their own merits, on a case-by-case basis. His delegation hoped that, in future, draft resolutions concerning exemptions would meet all procedural and translation requirements, and that the approach just taken by the Committee did not become practice.

10. **Mr. Dvinianine** (Russian Federation) said that, while his delegation had joined the consensus in sympathy with the difficult economic situation of Georgia, it believed that all Member States should adhere to the established rules of procedure.

11. **Ms. Buergo-Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that her delegation had joined the consensus on both draft resolutions on an exceptional basis, despite the laxity in procedure and the failure to translate the texts into the Organization's other official languages. With regard to draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78, she reaffirmed the role of the General Assembly and the need for the Committee on Contributions to consider such matters in accordance with established procedure. She fully agreed that, in future, requests for exemption should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Her delegation deeply regretted that the Committee on Contributions had been unable to submit a recommendation to the Fifth Committee, which would have eased its task considerably.

12. **Mr. Armitage** (Australia), speaking on behalf of Canada and New Zealand as well, said that they had had misgivings about the procedural basis for the Committee's decision and had therefore joined the consensus reluctantly. As he had stated earlier, requests for exemptions under Article 19 should be considered by the Committee on Contributions before the General Assembly exercise its decision-making authority. That view, which had garnered little support in the Committee, was based on a firm belief in the need to safeguard Article 19 as an effective instrument to encourage the timely payment of assessed contributions.

The approach which the Committee had taken would only complicate consideration of future requests for exemptions in a fair and consistent manner. It was also regrettable that the Committee on Contributions had been unable to advise the Fifth Committee. In seeking exemptions, Member States should make every effort to abide by the procedures of the relevant expert bodies. Lastly, the Fifth Committee should explore ways and means of avoiding the kind of dilemma in which it had found itself.

13. **Mr. Jara** (Chile) said that his delegation had been prepared, early on, to grant an exemption to Georgia and had therefore joined the consensus. It believed, however, that such action should be taken only by a decision of the General Assembly or on the advice of the Committee on Contributions, based on the outcome of a formal meeting of that body. Deviating from the usual procedure only undermined the role of the Committee on Contributions. In his delegations's view, draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78 was one of the most unfortunate and controversial draft resolutions ever adopted by the Fifth Committee, particularly, in view of its future implications.

14. **Mr. Park Hae-yun** (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78 in view of the difficult circumstances facing Georgia. It regretted, however, that the Fifth Committee, disregarding the procedure set out in rule 160 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, had not based its decision on a recommendation by the Committee on Contributions.

15. **Mr. Volski** (Georgia) expressed his delegation's deep appreciation for the Committee members' understanding, which had ultimately prevailed over any reservations, however justified, that they might have had.

16. **Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo** (Uganda) supported by **Mr. Yussuf** (Tanzania), expressed concern that adoption of the draft resolution had undermined the role of the General Assembly and of its expert body, the Committee on Contributions. With regard to exemptions, in the past, his delegation had championed the cause of countries facing economic difficulties and would continue to do so, provided the proper procedures were followed. While his delegation had not wished to block the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78, it had had difficulty joining it. In particular, it had problems with the phrase "taking into account the views expressed by Member States" in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, which was vague, misleading and devoid of content, and the phrase "until a final decision on the matter is taken by the General Assembly" in paragraph 3, which was equally imprecise.

17. **Mr. Sial** (Pakistan) said that his delegation strongly supported both draft resolutions, since the five Member States in question were unable to pay owing to conditions beyond their control. Citing the second sentence of Article 19 of the Charter and the final sentence of rule 160 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, he said that the adoption of the draft resolutions undermined neither the prerogative of the General Assembly nor the mandate of the Committee on Contributions. He hoped that, when it did consider Georgia's request, the Committee on Contributions would take into account the views of his delegation.

18. **Mr. Saha** (India) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/53/L.78 in recognition of the genuine difficulties faced by Georgia. Given the flexibility shown by Committee members, he was confident that that procedure, which was supposedly designed to help Member States, could be addressed during the next session of the General Assembly on a priority basis.

Other matters

19. **Ms. Buergo-Rodríguez** (Cuba), supported by **Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo** (Uganda), expressed concern at the emerging practice of deviating from the Fifth Committee's established decision-making procedure, namely, the introduction of agenda items by the relevant committee chairmen, followed by consideration in formal and, if necessary, informal meetings. She noted, in particular, the departure from standard practice with regard to the question of East Timor and the request by Georgia. In that context, she wondered whether Member States should engage in an in-depth review of the working methods of the Fifth Committee.

20. **The Chairman** said that it was not his intention to change the Committee's working methods. He had departed from standard procedure in the case of East Timor owing to the scope, nature and sensitivity of the question, but not in the case of 17 other peacekeeping operations. With regard to the draft resolution on the request by Georgia, he would have entertained all requests to have the item introduced by the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions or to defer a decision; however, such requests should have been made at the very outset of the Fifth Committee's deliberations.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.

United Nations A/C.5/53/SR.67

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Summary record of the 67th meeting
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Chairman: Mr. Abelian ..... (Armenia)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Agenda item 170: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

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99-81238 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 170: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (A/53/238 and Add.1, A/53/1019 and A/C.5/53/Add.2)

1. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) contained in document A/53/238/Add.1, said that it was clear from the various reports of the Secretary-General and from Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) that UNMIK was a very complex operation which would require a significant level of resources. Of the $50 million which had been appropriated with the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), pursuant to the provisions of section IV, paragraph 2, of General Assembly resolution 49/233 A, some $25 million had been committed primarily for equipment and transport operations. The Secretary-General was now seeking from the Assembly authority to enter into commitments with assessment in an amount not exceeding $200 million, inclusive of the amount of $50 million which had already been authorized by ACABQ, to meet the most immediate requirements for carrying out the initial phase of the Mission's implementation plan.

2. A number of considerations had led the Secretary-General to approach the General Assembly with its request at the current stage, even though he would not be in a position to submit a full budget to the Assembly before late September or early October. UNMIK did not have a military component to enable the Secretary-General to defer payments. Moreover, resources which had been assessed and collected for ongoing missions could not be tapped for Kosovo without affecting those missions and rendering an already precarious financial situation even more acute.

3. While the amount requested for UNMIK was not based on a detailed set of requirements, the types of expenditures incurred in every peacekeeping mission included the cost of civilian police, international and local staff, premises and accommodations, transport and air operations, communications, equipment, supplies and miscellaneous services. The Secretariat had begun to prepare the cost estimates for those expenditures based on the comprehensive framework and the structure outlined in the Secretary-General's report.

4. While he had no doubt that the Committee would have preferred to have more information at its disposal, the nature of the Mission would not permit payments to be deferred. Moreover, the financial situation of the Organization made it imperative that resources for the Mission be sought now, pending the submission of a full budget.

5. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General's urgent request had been submitted under unusual circumstances. The operation in Kosovo would be large and complex and total expenditure was expected to be much greater than $200 million, which ACABQ regarded as an advance, pending the submission of a detailed budget for the Mission.

6. The amount of $200 million was a matter of prudent judgement, since it was not based on the normal budgetary rationale. The Committee might recall that under similar circumstances the General Assembly had authorized a commitment authority of $200 million for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). Taking into account the effect of an alternative course of action, such as postponing action to a later date, ACABQ recommended that the Secretary-General should be granted the authority he had requested. ACABQ also invited the General Assembly to consider an assessment in the light of the factors set out in paragraph 9 of its report (A/53/1019).

7. **Mr. Sareva** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and, in addition, Iceland and Norway, said that the European Union had played a full part in efforts to resolve the Kosovo crisis and was determined to bear its fair share of the overall burden of reconstruction in Kosovo. The European Union strongly supported the establishment of UNMIK, which was a huge operation with an unprecedented mandate. In essence, the Organization would have to take the lead in bringing back to life a society whose physical and social infrastructure had been destroyed and must therefore be given the necessary resources to do so. In that connection, however, the European Union wished to emphasize that the physical reconstruction and rebuilding of Kosovo fell by definition outside the scope of the Mission's budget. Financing for reconstruction would be raised through international donor conferences.

8. The European Union fully agreed with the observations and recommendations contained in the report of ACABQ. In order to fulfil its mandate properly and in a timely manner, UNMIK would need sufficient and sizeable cash resources from the very outset. The Secretary-General's request for authority to enter into commitments of up to $200 million should therefore be granted and the amount fully

assessed in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter and with the Financial Regulations and Rules. However, while it recognized the urgency of the matter, the European Union nevertheless attached great importance to the early presentation of a detailed budget with full disclosure, explanation and justification.

9. **Mr. Barnwell** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, underlined the collective responsibility of the United Nations and its Member States for the maintenance of international peace and security. The situation in Kosovo was a highly complicated one and it was therefore regrettable that the Secretary-General had not provided adequate information and justification to permit the Committee to make an informed decision. In its report, ACABQ also noted that the Secretary-General had not offered a rationale for the figure of $200 million. In that connection, the Group of 77 and China wished to stress the importance of adhering to the relevant rules and procedures for the financing of United Nations peacekeeping missions.

10. **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico) said that, while it would have preferred more detailed information on the proposals for the Mission, Mexico supported the establishment of UNMIK and endorsed the recommendation of ACABQ contained in paragraph 9 of its report (A/53/1019). The Mission's cost was the collective responsibility of Member States and further highlighted the need for assessed contributions to be paid in full, on time and without conditions. Despite its own financial constraints, Mexico had always paid its assessed contributions in full.

11. **Ms. Shearouse** (United States of America) said that the United States supported the Secretary-General's budget request and understood the need to have sufficient funding to cover the cost of start-up operations in Kosovo. The request supported Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), which laid out a specific plan for ending the humanitarian tragedy in Kosovo and building a better future for its people.

12. Her delegation understood that a detailed budget would be prepared and presented at a later date and looked forward to reviewing it at that time.

13. **Mr. Calovski** (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) said that he supported the statement made by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union and associated countries and hoped that the assessments for the Mission would be realistic. Based on his own information about the situation in Kosovo, it would not be surprising if the Secretary-General were to increase at a later stage the amount of commitment authority requested for the Mission.

14. **Mr. Takahara** (Japan) said that his delegation supported the Secretary-General's request for commitment authority of up to $200 million, since the timely deployment of the Mission depended on the availability of cash resources. He hoped, however, that a detailed rationale for the request would be presented at a later stage, having regard to the pressure which Governments faced from their constituents to ensure that international organizations made efficient use of the resources made available to them.

15. **Ms. Güray** (Turkey) said that her Government supported the establishment of UNMIK. Because of the Mission's size and complexity, it was necessary to grant the Secretary-General the authority he sought to enter into commitments with assessment to meet the most immediate requirements of the Mission.

16. **Mr. Dvinyanin** (Russian Federation) said that as a permanent member of the Security Council the Russian Federation was aware of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and of the need for an immediate international civil presence in Kosovo. It therefore supported the Secretary-General's request for authority to enter into commitments with assessment for carrying out the initial phase of the implementation plan of UNMIK, notwithstanding the unusual circumstances under which the request had been submitted. The Russian Federation took note of the recommendation contained in paragraph 9 of the report of ACABQ (A/53/1019) and looked forward to the actual budget proposal, which should be formulated with full disclosure, explanation and justification.

17. **Mr. Park Hae-yun** (Republic of Korea) said that his Government supported the establishment of UNMIK, which should be given the necessary resources to fulfil its mandate. It therefore also supported the Secretary-General's request for authority to enter into commitments with assessment to meet the preliminary operating costs of the Mission pending the presentation of a full budget to the Assembly.

18. **Ms. Achouri** (Tunisia) said that her delegation was aware of the constraints faced by the Secretary-General in providing a detailed justification for his request for commitment authority to fund the Mission's preliminary operating costs. The deployment of an international civil presence in Kosovo formed part of the Organization's mandate to promote the maintenance of international peace and security and she hoped that the Committee would be in a position to adopt a draft decision without delay to permit the timely deployment of the Mission.

19. **Mr. Amolo** (Kenya), joined by **Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo** (Uganda) and **Mr. Yusuf** (United Republic of Tanzania),

said that Kenya supported the establishment of UNMIK, which would contribute to the creation of a stable environment in which the people of Kosovo could reclaim their lives. It was aware of the constraints that prevented the Secretary-General from providing a detailed justification for the proposed budget and hoped that the actual budget would be formulated in October in the usual fashion with full disclosure, explanation and justification. He hoped further that the same spirit with which the Organization was moving to establish UNMIK would be in evidence when consideration was being given to the funding of ongoing and future missions in Africa.

20. **Ms. Buergo Rodriguez** (Cuba) said that the mandate of UNMIK was one of unprecedented complexity and it was therefore regrettable that the Secretary-General's request for its funding had not been substantiated with the analysis and information that were needed to permit the Committee to take a decision. Her delegation, for example, had a number of questions, including the amount currently held in the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund.

21. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) said that the amount currently held in the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund was $97 million.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.